

The Centre for Family Literacy is dedicated to helping families grow and prosper.



The Centre for Family Literacy Centre Page

June 2008

Satellite Adult Tutor Program a Huge Success

In partnership with the Mill Woods Family Resource Centre, we are offering our Adult Tutor program at their Millbourne Community Site.

The Millbourne Site was selected because the Centre delivers family literacy programs there and it was felt that the Adult Tutor program would complement those programs. This location provides adults access to the program without leaving their community, which significantly reduces the barrier of transportation, both from a financial perspective and a distance perspective. The Millbourne Site also provides childcare while parents work with their tutors.



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“Worldwide, some 774 million adults cannot read or write. Two-thirds of these are women.”

UNESCO
Languages Matter
2008

7 Key Principles for Success

Dr. Susan B. Neuman is a professor at the University of Michigan, School of Education. She recently returned to this position after serving as the U.S. Assistant Secretary of Elementary and Secondary Education. Her publication, “Changing the Odds”, synthesizes what research has shown is necessary to ensure that family literacy programs and other early intervention programs for at risk children and families have the greatest outcomes.

“Children learn best when they are healthy, safe, and in close and enduring relationships with family, caregivers, and teachers.”

Dr. Susan B. Neuman

Dr. Neuman outlines seven major program principles that lead to positive and ongoing benefits for participants. Upon examination, the Centre for Family Literacy’s programs exhibit these principles across the board!

The research showed that:

1 Targeting children with the greatest needs produced the most benefit for the participants. For this reason the majority of our work is with children, in the context of their families, who are at risk in terms of not developing adequate literacy skills.

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Satellite Adult Tutor Program a Huge Success

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We currently have two strong and dynamic Functional Literacy classes full of eager participants, who come from a variety of circumstances with different strengths and challenges but who all share the common goal of improving their literacy skills. "My teacher is so good and helpful. I want to keep going," said one of the learners.

We initially found getting participants rather difficult but word spread and we had to recruit a second volunteer tutor so that we would not have to turn people away.

In addition to the classes, we also offer one-on-one tutoring. Recently a learner commented, "Thank you for finding someone to help me. I passed my learner's test!" This satellite program is proving that success is contagious!

The satellite program is funded in part by the Edmonton Rotary Club.

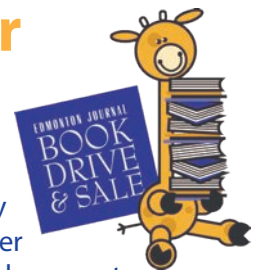
Seven Key Principles

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- 2 The earlier children and families receive help, the better, but intervention must be developmentally appropriate.
- 3 More intensive programming produces larger positive effects, and similarly, children and parents who participate most actively and regularly show the greatest overall progress.
- 4 In order to bridge the gap in learning levels, programs must incorporate compensatory instruction that accelerates learning and allows children who are "behind" to catch up to their peers.
- 5 Coordinated services that are respectful, culturally sensitive and link families to additional supports are also critical for programs to be successful.
- 6 It is no surprise that highly trained professional staff were found to be key to delivering effective programs. The Centre's role in providing training for family literacy practitioners and others working with families in Alberta and across Canada is a significant effort to increase knowledge in the field.
- 7 The final principle is accountability. Dr. Neuman states, "programs that monitor progress, provide careful oversight, create clear expectations, and evaluate effects have shown dramatic results."



Raise a Reader Book Sale



The Edmonton Journal's third annual book sale attracted many book lovers who perused the over 100,000 books that filled an old hangar at the Edmonton City Centre Airport. The sale raised close to \$58,000 in support of children's literacy programs in the Capital Region.

Change is a Constant that Has Become a Norm

It is interesting to note that the "Report from Our Leaders" in the Centre's 2007 annual report addressed the issue of change. And there will be big changes at the Centre with the retirement of Maureen Sanders at the end of August 2008.



Maureen has been the Executive Director of the Centre (known at that time as Prospects Literacy Association) since 1991. Early in her tenure, she became passionately interested in family literacy. She saw that adults had adult literacy programs and children had schools, but the family as a learning unit was a missing piece that needed to be addressed and supported. In 1993, Maureen delivered the first family literacy program to 8 people. In 2007, the Centre served 4,665 adults and 7,583 children through their family literacy programs.

Maureen's vision, and her belief in the power of literacy, her passion for people and her belief in their inherent skills and strengths have made her a community builder. She continually explores innovative ideas and opportunities, and sensitizes the community to literacy and family literacy issues.

She has been instrumental in moving family literacy onto the agenda locally, provincially and nationally. Maureen is highly regarded and recognized both within the literacy field and beyond, and is often invited to participate on national and provincial committees addressing the current state of literacy.

"I look forward to spending more time with my grandchildren — they are only young for a very short time" commented Maureen when announcing her retirement. Although she is leaving her official duties at the Centre, Maureen will continue to work on Foundations in Family Literacy, a national training project sponsored by the Centre and on other initiatives that support the ongoing development of the family literacy field.

Learning Together

Learning Together will begin September 16 at St. Gerard Catholic Elementary School. The program runs for 36 weeks, two afternoons a week, and is designed for parents with children between 3 and 5 years old.

For more information, please call 421-7323.

Recommended Summer Reading

A Confederacy of Dunces – John Kennedy Toole

A New Earth: Awakening Your Life's Purpose – Eckhart Tolle

A Thousand Splendid Suns – Khaled Hosseini

All That Matters – Wayson Choy.

Atonement – Ian McEwan

Five Quarters of the Orange – Joanne Harris

Kitchen Confidential: Adventures in the Culinary Underbelly
– Anthony Bourdain

Marley & Me: Life and Love with the World's Worst Dog
– John Grogan

Saturday – Ian McEwan

The Jade Peony – Wayson Choy

The Kite Runner – Khaled Hosseini

The Mission Song – John le Carré

The Swallows of Kabul – Yasmina Khadra

Online donations to the Centre can be made through CanadaHelps.org



The Centre for Family Literacy gratefully acknowledges the ongoing support of the following:



Edmonton & Area
Child & Family Services Region 6



The Great Book Club Challenge

Calling all Book Club members. The Cosmos Book Club has issued a challenge to all Book Clubs to raise money for the Classroom on Wheels (C.O.W.) Bus. They have currently raised \$700 and hope that others will pickup the challenge to either match or beat their contribution.

The C.O.W. Bus program is a drop-in bookmobile that offers families with few resources the opportunity to borrow books for free and also provides informal programming that assists parents in supporting their pre-school children's literacy development.

A member of the Cosmos Book Club said, "Who better to be interested in supporting literacy than Book Club members – it just seems so natural."

Think about the worlds books have opened to you – worlds where you can laugh, cry, or simply escape from your daily life for an hour or two. Then imagine what it must be like to be a child who has no books, or whose parents have trouble reading so there are no bedtime stories.

More information on the Great Book Club Challenge can be found on our website.

Jim Cuddy Raises Money for Literacy



The Centre's inaugural An Evening of Wine & Words held at the Royal Mayfair Golf and Country Club was a great success – raising \$38,000 in support of the purchase of a new bus for our local Classroom on Wheels program.

Jim Cuddy, best known for his work with Blue Rodeo, was the keynote speaker. He discussed his song lyrics, his passion for literacy and delighted the guests by playing a few songs.

It was a memorable evening and the Centre looks forward to making this an annual event.

The Centre would like to thank the following sponsors for their support of the evening:

Bosch Campbell Investment Management Group
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Literacy Develops in Families First

The Centre for Family literacy is dedicated to helping Alberta grow and prosper. Our innovative programs, training and research help Alberta families achieve what they imagine - improved education, jobs and health.

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